

Chester, PA — Today at Widener University, Congressman Joe Sestak spoke at the opening ceremony of the "Moving Wall," a half-size replica of the Washington, D.C. Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Created in 1984, the Moving Wall gives those who cannot visit the nation's capital a chance to reflect on the more than 58,000 Americans whose names are inscribed on the Wall.

"No one can deny the power of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.," stated Congressman Sestak. " This replica here brings that power to people all across the country, giving Americans a chance to reflect on those who served and sacrificed during the Vietnam War, and letting us share that experience with our veterans, our families, and our children."

Twenty five years ago marked the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. This Moving Wall began touring the country just two years after the original memorial opened. Over the past two decades, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Moving Wall have given respect and honor to the more than 58,000 names inscribed on the wall. And they remind us of the more than 1,800 Pennsylvanians lost in Vietnam.

The Memorial and the Moving Wall give all Americans, and particularly those who served in Vietnam, an opportunity to mourn our fallen citizens. Today, a new generation of American men and women are engaged in a global war - a fight against terrorism. We have seen the horror of war brought to our own country. And as always, our military has responded to our nation's call.

"When I look at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Moving Wall, I am reminded why I sought to serve my country. I am reminded why I see so many dedicated veterans advocates all across Pennsylvania. And, I am reminded that we all share a commitment to honor those who serve our country," added Congressman Sestak.

In Congress, Congressman Sestak has been working on programs that honor the sacrifices of our veterans. He successfully passed two amendments to H.R. 1538, the Wounded Warrior Assistance Act, which will improve mental health care for our wounded soldiers. The first amendment highlights the fact that mental health care is an essential component to the medical services offered to our Veterans and the members of our Armed Services by clarifying that 'medical care' as defined in H.R. 1538 includes mental health care services. The second amendment requires the Secretary of the Department of Defense to develop a plan to help prevent Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other stress-related psychopathologies (including

substance abuse conditions) from developing in our military service members. In addition, it requires the Secretary to submit to Congress within 180 days a plan for establishing a Peer-Reviewed research program within the Defense Health Program's research and development function to research the prevention of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and how to best strengthen the psychological resiliency of our military service members. Both amendments passed with unanimous support.

These amendments came out of a recent conversation Congressman Sestak had with a doctor at the VA Medical Center in Coatesville, PA who works with and treats veterans with PTSD. The doctor emphasized to Joe his concerns about the level of resources, attention, and the scope of care available to those who need mental health services. This is why, in addition to these two amendments, Congressman Sestak is also working on additional legislation addressing the funding of PTSD and quality reporting of medical care by DOD and the VA.

Congressman Sestak also serves on the Committee on Armed Services where he has been addressing ways to improve our defense security. He introduced legislation, H.R. 960, the Enhancing America's Security through Redeployment from Iraq Act, which requires that, no later than December 31, 2007, all U.S. Armed Forces serving in Iraq be redeployed outside of Iraq, either to locations within the Middle East or Southwest Asia regions or other regions or nations, or to the United States. He also voted for H.R. 1591, the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health and Iraq Accountability Act, which sets a date certain for redeploying our troops from Iraq. And he cosponsored and voted for H.R. 1, the Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act, which is the first comprehensive response to the non-intelligence reform recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. □ According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.*

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